

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 are in the case. Each has been amended to point out that the positions of the x-ray receptor and x-ray source not taught in the applied references.

Claim 1 was rejected over Negrelli U.S. Patent 6,200,024. As understood, the Negrelli patent proposes an x-ray source below the patient table and an x-ray receptor above the table. No teaching could be found for providing the variety of imaging protocols that the invention of claim 1 can provide, including for imaging protocols in which the x-ray source is above the receptor and protocols for lateral imaging in which the x-ray source and receptor are at matching levels. When the patient is on a table, those positions include through-table imaging in which the x-ray source is above the patient and the receptor is below the table, and lateral imaging in which the source and receptor are at respective sides of the patient's table. As understood, the Negrelli patent does not teach such protocols and it does not appear that the equipment proposed in Negrelli can provide such protocols, particularly one for lateral imaging.

Claim 2 recites movement of the first column that is independent of movement of the second column, and claim 3 recites movement of the column that is independent of movement of the x-ray source or its support. Each of claims 2 and 3 further recites positioning that includes imaging protocols in which the x-ray source is above the receptor and protocols for lateral imaging in which the x-ray source and receptor are at matching levels. These claims were rejected over Hauck, et al. U.S. Patent 4,501,011 and Roos, et al. U.S. Patent 6,041,097. No teaching could be found in Hauck, et al. that the receptor can be below the source for some imaging protocols but the source and receptor also are used for lateral imaging protocols in which they are at matching levels. While Hauck, et al. suggest decoupling the source and receptor such as for stowing them at room corners, their patent proposes coupling them mechanically for joint movement between positions for different imaging protocols, in contrast with the independent movement for imaging protocols recited in claims 2 and 3. No teaching could be found in Roos, et al. that the source and receptor can be supported for independent movement – to the contrary, the source and receptor are fixed to each other to rotate together about the patient in the illustrated CT scanner.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are patentable over the applied references at least for the reasons discussed above.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this amendment timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition, and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the requisite fees to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125. The Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a further telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Entry of this amendment and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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